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BOOK REVIEWS

The White Path. Alabama-Koasati Indians in Texas. By W. E. S. Folsom-Dickerson. San Antonio (The Naylor Press), 1965, 148 pp. \$3.95.

How did the Alabama and Koasati Indians achieve unity and integration over a long period of migration and what qualities did they possess that made it possible for them to live harmoniously with the pioneers and finally win a permanent home for themselves in East Texas? What elements of their original culture remain and what elements have they adopted from the white man's culture? What stages of cultural change have they undergone? Are integrating forces still uniting these Indians today and what are the implications for the survival of such forces? These are the questions involved in the problem the author of *The White Path* has set for himself, and he concedes at the outset that the problem is historical as well as ethnological. However, in presenting his argument the author pays scant attention to history, little more to ethnology, and none at all to the principles of logic.

Research for this study was made possible twenty-five years ago (May 24, 1940) by the University of Texas Research Council under the direction of the Department of Anthropology. The author, his wife, and three children went to the reservation and lived there three months with the Presbyterian missionary. Later, Mr. Folsom-Dickerson returned to the reservation alone and spent a month in the home of the Alabama Indian, Mcconico Battise, a gentleman of great dignity, wisdom, and perspicacity. It was perhaps during this month's stay with Mcconico, who was both his informer and interpreter, that the author obtained the information for his excellent second chapter and the best parts of the third and fourth. The style throughout the book is literate, but not distinguished. However, in the second chapter and in parts of the third and fourth, his style is captivating and his material authentic—authentic, that is, in the 1940's. At no point in the book does the author discuss conditions that existed after 1950; consequently, many conditions that he says exist "today" simply do not exist today. Many, many changes have occurred during the past fifteen years, and it is regrettable that Mr. Folsom-Dickerson did not bring his research up to date.

The organization of *The White Path* is good: the author poses his problem, submits his evidence, and draws his conclusions. The fault lies in the application of his material to his pattern. Everything is wrong, beginning with his major premise, which forms the title of his book—*The White Path*. The path of the Indian—including the Alabama and Koasati—was never white; it was red all the way to final defeat by the white man.

After stating his problem, Mr. Folsom-Dickerson states what appears to be his theme, his purpose in writing the book: "In this age all human paths seem destined literally to run red with blood of men who cannot agree, these masters in the complex art of compromise may well show us the

solution for which we yearn but cannot find." Surely Mr. Folsom-Dickerson must know that when first we hear of these Indians, they, or at least a part of them, were in Northern Mississippi, where, in the year 1541, the army of Hernando de Soto had a memorable encounter with them. They came upon a stockaded fort whose defenders were Alabama Indians, as both Biedma and Garcilaso de la Vega clearly imply. Biedma states that this stockade represented something unusual in Indian warfare, a deliberate challenge to military emulation without expectation of other prizes. He says:

. . . without there being either women to protect or provisions to secure, and only to try our valor with theirs, the Indians put up a very strong stockade directly across the road, about three hundred of them standing behind it, resolute to die rather than give back.

Yet the author of *The White Path* says, "The Alabama first appear in 1541 when De Soto attacked the village of Alibamo."

The conclusion is not based on evidence but is drawn out of thin air. In fact, the author himself admits that the elaboration of his argument is "my own, and is naturally subject to my own mental slants, pet theories, and the like."

In spite of the fact that the author's logical presentation is poor, much of the information contained in *The White Path* is valuable and reading it is well worth the short time required. His discussions concern setting, religion, cosmic and natural conceptions, material traits and industries, language, social organization, government and social control, and life cycle. Many historians, persons interested in Amerindian history and culture, and persons interested in East Texas lore will want to add the book to their libraries.

ELMA HEARD

Stephen F. Austin State College

Legends of the Pineys. By Joseph F. Combs. San Antonio (The Naylor Company), 1965. 100 pp. \$3.95.

The scenes for writings in Texas history and legend have been set by the Dobies and Webbs and Boatrights whose main interests have been the Texas of the Brush Country or the Llano Estacado or West of the Pecos. The old-time gunfighters and land barons and the cattle and cactus have had their share of chroniclers, and it is time that the interest was shifted to the bay-galls of the Big Thicket and the sand hills of the East Texas piney woods. Exciting history was being scratched into this red dirt before cow punching was ever thought of as a steady occupation.

One of those who is helping to shift the interest to East Texas is Joe F. Combs, who has been soaking up the history and the legends of this part of the country since his youth. Mr. Combs was born and reared on a farm in Shelby County, and to many people—especially to the readers of his "Farm Corner" column in the Beaumont *Enterprise*—he is the of-

ficial spokesman for those interested in preserving the tales and traditions of the East Texas past. His latest publication, *Legends of the Pineys* (San Antonio: The Naylor Company, 1965—\$3.95), is a thin but interesting collection of a few of these old stories.

Legends of the Pineys contains just enough to let the reader know that there is a lot more. Mr. Combs' coverage of the Shelby County war in 1842 between the Regulators and the Moderators is exciting and complete in outline. His interpretation of this point in history in "Seventeen at Midnight" is valuable also because he attempts to understand both sides. The Moderators are popularly depicted as outlaws of the Hole-in-the-Wall breed, riding out of the Sabine River bottom to prey on the God-fearing, law-abiding folk of Shelby County. Combs implies that the Moderators were not of that black a hue and that the vigilante justice of the Regulators was frequently and unduly severe. He struck a new note for me in his inclusion of four East Texas Mata Haris, hard-riding, fast-shooting ladies on the side of the Regulators, who served as spies before the final battles between the two factions.

Another of Combs' legends with an interesting turn is the story of Martha MacAuliff and her battle with the Indians. She not only won that battle; she won a fight with her husband when he returned—a fight that had begun when he insisted that they leave their Georgia home and prove up land on the Texas frontier. They left their cabin on the Attoyac soon after and headed back to Georgia.

Most of Combs' longer ghost tales are interesting and well developed. One undeveloped exception is his story of the Lady in Blue, which was related as an isolated phenomenon rather than as one more episode in a legend as old as Texas history. Readers will enjoy his stories of the phantom bull with the eight-foot horn spread, the mischievous pebble thrower of Peachtree Village, and the Laughing Ghost of Todd Springs. Combs includes the Alabama Indian legend of the white squirrel that became a tribal totem after it led them to a rich hunting ground in the Big Thicket. Mr. Combs concludes with some fragmentary accounts of ghost tales—Bailey's Light, the Ghost Road—and other legends and tales he has heard in his rounds.

Legends of the Pineys is a tempting volume for the East Texas historian and folklorist because it indicates that there are very many directions left to go. These stories and many others are still shifting around among the old settlers, waiting for someone to study them in depth and get to the real heart of the people and the times of the East Texas past.

FRANCIS EDWARD ABERNETHY
Stephen F. Austin State College

The Confederate Quartermaster in the Trans-Mississippi by James L. Nichols. Austin (University of Texas Press), 1964. Pp. vii + 126. Index. \$7.50.

Among the most unappreciated, hardest working, and least romantic of Confederate military figures were the quartermasters. Charged with

manifold responsibilities, they handled all of the armies' logistical requirements except in ordnance and commissary areas. Indeed, with these two exceptions, the Confederate quartermasters could well be equated with the entire service support element of current major military units. They provided such basic items as clothing, transportation, pay, and "graves registration" services. Apart from storing, issuing, and accounting for supplies, the quartermasters of the Confederate Southwest were deeply immersed in the fabrication and procurement of military goods. They had to operate transportation repair centers, oversee the manufacture of clothing and equipment, administer tax programs, and regulate trade in the Trans-Mississippi region.

Through the use of manuscript papers and military records, Professor Nichols has offered great insight into the hitherto little understood quartermaster activities with this volume on *The Confederate Quartermaster in the Trans-Mississippi*. As it stands, the book offers a fine example of what Civil War scholarship should be producing: not just another strictly military re-hashing of Grant *versus* Lee, but an inquiry into a previously little known and largely unappreciated facet in the great epic story of the Civil War. By concentrating on the procurement aspects of quartermaster functions, Professor Nichols traces the gradual expansion of logistical capabilities in the Southwest, he clearly outlines the numerous perplexing difficulties of the quartermasters, and he concludes that there was simply not enough time to develop supply services to a fully effective extent.

Professor Nichols deserves a vote of thanks for this contribution to Civil War literature. Again, it is work such as this, casting light in little known portions of the great story, that represents contemporary Civil War scholarship at its best.

ALLAN C. ASHCRAFT
Texas A&M University

Cracker Barrel Chronicles: A Bibliography of Texas Town and County Histories. By John H. Jenkins. Austin (The Pemberton Press), 1965. 509 pp. Illustrations, appendixes, and index. \$15.00.

As the title indicates, this massive volume is a compilation of Texas county, town, and local histories from the earliest writings to the present. In any bibliography one of the most difficult tasks for the author is to define boundaries, and Mr. Jenkins has stated his for this volume as follows:

"histories of local areas in Texas that appear as separate entities. As you see from this, any local *history*, whatever the subject, was included whether it was part of a work of larger scope or not, but local *descriptions* are not included unless they appear as a separate imprint or article."

Within these limitations, the author has included more than 5000 items, including books, pamphlets, articles, theses, and special or memorial edi-

tions of newspapers. These are arranged alphabetically by county, and further to assist the reader, a cross index for towns and counties, a separate index for periodicals, and a comprehensive general index have been added. Within the individual entries Mr. Jenkins has given an indication of the scarcity and estimated value of the several items. This is very useful but it would have been even more valuable if he had included a place where the rarer articles could be found.

Any bibliography is incomplete but the omissions here are not significant in comparison with the large number of entries included and the great efforts which the author extended to provide complete citations and research aids to the student. This compilation provides a successor to H. Bailey Carroll's *Texas County Histories, A Bibliography*, published in 1943. *Cracker Barrel Chronicles* should become a standard research guide for every library and historical society in Texas for a generation to come.

ROBERT S. MAXWELL
Stephen F. Austin State College

Recollection of Farm Life. By Robert L. Hunt, Sr. San Antonio (The Naylor Company), 1965. xi+184 pp. Illustrations. \$4.95.

As the author asserts in his initial statement, "History is made up of many small things—not just major happenings that most historians have written about. Nobody thinks the humdrum affairs from day to day are worthy of reading about, when as a matter of fact it is the little things of life that make up the most interesting part of history." It is for the preservation of such happenings in the life of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century farmer that Professor Hunt contributes this volume.

Approximately one half of the narrative is devoted to a very interesting, informal portrayal of farm life in Northeast Texas during the turn of the century. Drawing from a wealth of personal experiences, the author furnishes colorful reading on the habits, folklore, humor, problems, ethics, customs, and educational and social trends prevalent among the rural population of this period. The author's homespun humor and lucid style is especially evident in this extended train of personal recollections.

The value of the volume is greatly enhanced by the original source material contained in the latter half of the work. In discussing the disciplines and influence of the country church, significant parts of the minutes of the Snow Hill Baptist Church, founded in Titus County in 1866, are effectively used.

Of particular interest is the diary of a young college girl who traveled from post Civil War Georgia to settle near Jefferson, Texas. This diary, currently in the possession of the author, gives a daily account of the trip through the reconstruction South from October 17 until December 27, 1867. At one point she observed, "So I will not bring up the bright past to contrast with the darkness of present for instead of the

peace of yore, political disturbances of a dark and pretentious nature now prevail in the land." The record continues through somewhat broken entries until June 2, 1869. This literate young woman was able to optimistically record near the ending of her chronicle, "Indeed, I believe that I love the land of the West already, and may time only discover new charms."

The last section of the work is devoted to the presentation of a selected group of letters written in 1918-1919 by the author during his service in the Coast Artillery. Although these letters initially were not intended for publication, they very aptly present the views, reactions, and attitudes of an average East Texas farm boy caught up in the overwhelming experiences of "the great crusade."

The text is accompanied by a section of photographs representative of the period, but they are not integrated directly into the narrative. Due to the nature of the work, the customary footnotes and bibliography are not included. An Index, however, would have contributed greatly to the useableness of the volume.

Mr. Hunt has brought to this task extensive knowledge obtained from a rural upbringing combined with a professional career devoted to the study and teaching of agriculture. In this effort, he has done much to recapture the spirit and character of the farm folk as they went about the daily routine of living. He has furnished for some the opportunity for nostalgic recollection; for others, he has preserved an eyewitness account of a quickly vanishing way of life.

GWENDOLYN FITE OSBURN
Stephen F. Austin State College

Texas in the War of 1861-1865. Compiled by Marcus J. Wright, Brig. Gen., C.S.A., and edited by Harold B. Simpson, Col. U.S.A.F. (Ret.). Hillsboro (Hill Junior College Press), 1965. xx + 246 pp. Notes, appendices, bibliography, and index. \$7.50.

The name of Marcus J. Wright is well-known to serious students of the American Civil War. Those who pursue the manuscript sources to their several repositories or read them in printed form in the massive volumes of the *Official Records* are aware of General Wright's significant work in compiling war records. Although the *Official Records* project was strictly federal, at first, Brigadaire General (C.S.A.) Wright eventually became "Agent of the War Department, For the Collection of Confederate Records"; and he did an outstanding job of persuading "Johnny Reb" veterans to share their long-hidden manuscripts with us all. This reviewer has encountered Wright's inventory sheets in several collections, whereon each item borrowed by the War Records office was listed and checked off upon return to its southern owner.

Besides his official endeavors Wright also prepared various lists and compilations for sundry publications in the generation after the War.

One of his more elaborate projects, along this line, was a huge tome entitled *Official and Illustrated War Record Embracing Nearly One Thousand Pictorial Sketches . . .* (Washington, 1898) which he produced in collaboration with Colonel Benjamin La Bree and James P. Boyd. He wrote a *Life of General Winfield Scott* (1894), a *History of the Spanish-American War* (1900) and *Battles and Commanders of the Civil War* (1908), along with other sketches and works.

In the book under review, Colonel Harold B. Simpson, through the Hill Junior College Press, has published General Wright's special set of notes on *Texas in the War 1861-1865*, a manuscript deposited in the Texas State Archives. This account, as presented by the editor, prints out at seventy pages. The remaining 144 pages consists of Colonel Simpson's notes on Wright's work, vita on personnel and units, pictures and portraits, and a set of appendices illustrating Texas steps toward secession and war. Professor John Duncan, of Texas A&M University, contributed a calendar of the war in Texas which appears as Appendix V.

This compilation undoubtedly will prove useful as a place of concentration for a great deal of information about many Texans in the War, but it is by no means complete, and, perhaps does not pretend to be, as to significant Texans and their roles in the great conflict. The list of quartermaster officers, for example, given by Wright, is most incomplete; and, too, there is no reflection of thesis and dissertation work in Texas graduate schools. The roster of Texan participation in the War might be widened considerably by reference to such studies.

Texas in the War 1861-1865 is an attractive book; the photographs of more prominent officers and statesmen, especially, reproduced well; certainly a great deal of work went into assembling this material. Now, what we need is for someone to combine all these rosters, lists and monographs of the past century into a general history of the war in the Trans-Mississippi, a history which will treat the subject in depth and dimension.

JAMES L. NICHOLS

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